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Letter From Gaza, After Five Years Away

BY ANERA DIRECTOR OF DONOR DEVELOPMENT HANI ALMADHOUN



A couple weeks ago, I hugged my parents for the first time in more than five years.

My wife and I, along with our two girls, recently made it into Gaza to spend a few weeks with our families from whom we both have been separated for years. Our journey through Egypt's Sinai was long and tiresome, with checkpoints and obstacles at every turn, but ultimately we made it!

With all the delays on the Egyptian side of the crossing, my elderly mother had to wait for hours before seeing us. The anticipation was getting to us both, as we had not hugged in five years and she had yet to meet our little girls.

As soon as I saw her outside the crossing, I ran towards her and we fell into each other's arms. I truly let go at that moment and felt calm and relaxed. With tears in her eyes, she then embraced my two tired girls who were overwhelmed with joy to finally be held by their grandmother.

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credits

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Rania Elhilou, photographer

Hani Almadhoun and his mother, June 2018

Letter from Gaza continued from page 1



A young man runs his own coffee and snack stand on a Gaza beach.

The Dignity of Work & The Importance of Supporting Gaza

After such a long time away, I have been able to look at Gaza with fresh eyes and I am amazed at what I see. The theme that keeps striking me is – despite the blockade, three wars, bombardments and political gridlock – the everyday Palestinians I meet are figuring out ways to make life better for themselves, their kids and their neighborhoods. They are healing their own wounds, comforting one another and extending a hand to those who need help. I really respect that.

Many people in Gaza find ways to make a living. It's the dignity of work that keeps them going. I have met families who rent out sports fields and other open spaces for events. There are also many young entrepreneurs with stands selling coffee, tobacco, small toys or slushies. I had to do a double-take the other day when I saw a smoothie truck drive past me. In Washington, DC, where I live, food trucks are everywhere. In Gaza, they are a miracle.

But, despite how resilient and creative the people of my beloved Gaza are, they need a caring community from the outside world to help bring their hopes to life.

I am fortunate enough to work for Anera and see how generous donors can actually make a difference on the ground. I've been on many visits to Anera projects throughout Gaza. I've seen how your support for women's food-production cooperatives has tripled members' incomes. I've seen greenhouses on small plots of land feed whole communities and provide income to enterprising families. I've also seen many Anera construction projects employ dozens of workers who would otherwise not have jobs. The list goes on.

The challenges Gaza faces are real and many families are impoverished. But, believe me, they have an unbreakable determination to survive, thrive and build. And, buoyed by your support, they will.

TO HELP SALVE THE WOUNDS OF THE LATEST VIOLENCE AGAINST GAZA

Anera donors provided...



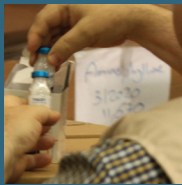
8,500 blood bags

for blood transfusions and donations
to the Gaza Central Blood Bank



3,000 blood screening kits

to test donated blood for viruses
and infections



97,000 vials of antibiotics

to prevent infections during surgery
and treat a host of illnesses



\$6,503,000 in donated medicines

to restock depleted supplies at clinics
and hospitals throughout Gaza

OUTPOURING OF SUPPORT FOR GAZA

Since early March in Gaza, Palestinians have endured violence, death and thousands of injuries. Added to this are the years of continuing blockade that have devastated the economy. Jobs are nearly impossible to come by, electricity is scarce and medical facilities cannot keep the stocks of medicines they need. Life for many in Gaza is a day-to-day struggle.

This spring and throughout the month of Ramadan, Anera donors responded forcefully to the latest bloodshed in Gaza. More than 500 individuals and many institutional partners heeded the call for basic foodstuffs and vital health care supplies.

One long-time partner, Direct Relief, came through with a financial gift – on top of their significant and regular in-kind donations – for local medicine purchases so our on-the-ground staff could respond quickly to the crisis. The result of this generosity was that Anera was able to provide the doctors at Shifa Hospital, the primary surgical facility in Gaza, with exactly what they needed to heal people in desperate need as the violence continued.



Our staff provided thousands of Palestinian families in Gaza with ample food supplies to see them through Ramadan (pictures on the next two pages). These nutritious and filling foods mean so much to families who live in precarious homes and who do their best to make ends meet. It is particularly meaningful during Ramadan for families to know that people around the world have not forgotten them.

“In the month of Ramadan, I am thankful for all of Anera’s supporters and I pray for all those who never forget Gaza.”

– Amani (photo), mother and recipient of an Anera food package

JOURNEY OF AN ANERA FOOD PARCEL

Generous Anera donors
receive food parcels. They
When they learned of the
and got the best deals on
the parcels for delivery to
days of the start of Ramadan



Load the truck
and deliver to
partner organizations.



Organize the
parcels for families
to pickup



Bring the parcels
home from the
delivery location



Unpack the box
and put away
the food

gave \$132,300 so that 2,646 needy families in Gaza and Lebanon could
thank you!

the generous donations, Anera staff immediately found in-country suppliers
of high quality, nutritious foodstuffs. Then we hired local workers to package
for partner organizations. Families were able to take their food home within
a day.



Check family names
against lists of
preselected recipients



Prepare and eat
filling meals
throughout Ramadan

In Case You Missed It

THE LATEST FROM ANERA.ORG



Collecting the Rain in Tulkarem to Water the Land

Ahmad and his five other siblings mainly live off the land his father, Ismail, sharecrops with his brother. Their property is located in Tulkarem in the large agricultural village of Dhinnaba, famous for its greenhouses that grow mallow, cucumbers and tomatoes.

Getting enough water is a constant struggle for Palestinians in the West Bank. Anera donors recently provided the two brothers, along with five other farmers in their village, with small reservoirs that collect rainwater from the roofs of their greenhouses, allowing them to use water that otherwise would have gone to waste.

“This project saves us time, money and effort and gives us peace of mind,” says Ahmad. “We’re producing more and producing better... Harvest time, for me, is the best part of being a farmer. I literally hold the fruits of my hard labor in my own hands.”

READ MORE
anera.org/tulkarem



Improving the Lives of Deaf & Hard-of-Hearing People in Gaza

Every corner of the Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children shows the impact of how an early and long-standing partnership with Anera helped the society grow to provide the essential services and education that it does. Atfaluna today is the only school in Gaza that works to improve the lives of deaf and hard-of-hearing people.

In 1993, Atfaluna established an audiology department that was funded by Anera donors. By 1997 the department had grown to become the first in the Gaza Strip to provide comprehensive services to people with hearing problems. Through the years, Anera has organized training programs for Atfaluna staff, renovated and expanded its facilities and generally supported Atfaluna’s work to prepare many talented children and adults for full lives despite limited hearing.

READ MORE
anera.org/atfaluna



Anera Makes Mental Health Treatment Available in Lebanon

Lebanon’s long history of political turmoil and violence has led the residents of the country into a state of continuing insecurity and an environment that is vulnerable to mental health disorders. It is estimated that among the Arab states, Lebanon has the highest prevalence of anxiety.

Due to insufficient resources for and the stigma around mental health services in Lebanon, nine out of ten people who need help can’t get it. In this environment, the Family Guidance Center emerged in Beirut in 1997 to address the need for specialized preventive and therapeutic mental health services among young Palestinian and Syrian refugees.

Anera donors have just delivered to the Center a large quantity of medicine for vulnerable mental health patients who would otherwise not be able to get the treatment they need.

READ MORE
anera.org/FGC



Reserve your seat
at a beautiful table for

Anera's 50th Anniversary Dinner

Friday, September 28, 2018
Ritz-Carlton, Washington, DC

Come mingle with old and new friends.
This fun and inspiring evening will take you on a
journey through five decades of Anera's work in
Palestine and Lebanon. Together, we'll also lay the
foundation for delivering future impactful programs,
building better lives so hope finds its way.



Questions?
dinner@anera.org or +1 202.266.9729

To reserve,
sponsor or donate
visit anera.org/dinner

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Letter From Gaza, After Five Years Away

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Students of the Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children in Gaza, a school Anera donors have supported since it opened in the early 1990s.